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ABSTRACT

In order to examine whether name cues to race influenced job-hiring decisions and judgments about job candidates, 72 white participants read a mock resume for a fictitious job applicant. In all cases, the resume contained the same background information about the candidate; however, one resume listed an applicant with a name previously judged to belong to a white person ("Glenn Andrew"); one had a name seen as indicative of an African American person ("Earl Tyrone"); and one included no name information. Participants evaluated the resume and candidate under the supervision of either a black or a white experimenter. The results revealed evidence of bias against candidates. Under a black experimenter, white participants judged the African-American candidate as less honest, gave him a lower starting salary, and were less likely to hire him compared to the white candidate. However, people thought that candidates were more competent and conscientious when the experimenter was African-American, although all acknowledged that the African-American-named candidate had less future potential than did the white-named candidate. The results are discussed within a framework that suggests that cues to race must be made salient in order for (most) white people to act in a prejudicial manner. A cue for careful, egalitarian behavior (an African experimenter) apparently did not cause an "overcompensation" effect whereby participants attempted to be overtly non-racist by providing more positive evaluations of the candidate they thought was African-American. (Author/KC)

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Sorry.....You Aren't Qualified: Students' Perceptions of Job Candidates as a Function of Name Race

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Abstract

In order to examine whether name cues to race influenced job-hiring decisions and judgments about job candidates, White participants (N = 72) read a mock resume for a fictitious job applicant. In all cases, the resume contained the same background information about the candidate; however, one resume listed an applicant with a name previously judged to belong to a White person (Glenn Andrew), one had a name seen as indicative of a Black person (Earl Tyrone), and one included no name information. Participants evaluated the resume and candidate under either a Black or White experimenter. The results revealed evidence of bias against candidates. Under a Black experimenter, White participants judged the Black candidate as less honest, gave him a lower starting salary, and were less likely to hire him compared to the White candidate. However, people thought that candidates were more competent and conscientious when the experimenter was Black, although all acknowledged that the Black-named candidate has less future potential than did the White-named candidate. The results are discussed within a framework that suggests that cues to race must be made salient in order for (most) White people to act in a prejudicial manner.

Sorry.....You Aren't Qualified: Students' Perceptions of Job Candidates as a Function of Name Race

Although people who are not overtly prejudiced try to avoid allowing stereotypes to influence their attitudes and behavior, even egalitarian White people behave in a discriminating manner toward Blacks (Devine, 1989). Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) argue that racism is still alive and strong but in an indirect form. Aversive racism is the term used to describe subtle racist attitudes among those who promote racial equality and try to be egalitarian. These attitudes include negative feelings, typically in the form of anxiety or discomfort. In many cases, an automatic effect seems to occur, whereby White people do not understand or recognize that they are showing bias (Gaertner & McLaughlin, 1983). Indeed, the most prejudice often emanates from people who are actively trying not to stereotype (Macrae, Bodenhausen, Milne, & Jetten, 1994).

Prejudiced behavior is most likely to occur when the cues for bias have not been made salient (Devine, 1989); thus, the influence of subtle racial cues has been the focus of research in stereotyping. For example, the racial connotation of a name can impact judicial decisions as perpetrators with Black names are seen as likely to have engaged in previous criminal behavior and, in some cases, receive longer jail sentences (Shaneberger, Williamson, & Brownlow, 1996).

The findings that race leads to bias in court (Johnson, Whitestone, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995) may emanate from the belief that Blacks are disproportionally responsible for crime (Kleck, 1981). Thus, the current study examines name cues to race in a situation where fewer stereotypical beliefs may exist: in a job-hiring simulation. We studied whether a candidate's name affected perceptions of his qualifications, abilities, and potential. We also examined whether experimenter

race (Black/White) differentially influenced perceptions of job candidates.

Method

Pretesting and Selection of Stimulus materials

Names. Eighty first-middle name pairs from a yearbook of a Black college and a White high school were rated on a 7-point bipolar scale (endpoints 1 "likely to be Black" and 7 "likely to be White"). Name judgments were made by 30 (15 Black, 15 White) people, and were reliable (alpha = .95); thus, mean values for race of each name were calculated. One Black (Earl Tyrone, M = 2.33) and one White (Glenn Andrew, M = 5.47) name were chosen as stimuli. Mean race ratings of each name fell beyond 1.38 SD of the overall rating (M = 4.09) of names, and were about equal in length, vowel/consonant ratio, and syllables.

Stimulus resume. A resume was designed for the experiment by a Career Counselor. The fictitious applicant supposedly had graduated with a Business Administration major/Computer Science minor from the University of Texas. The qualifications given were designed to make the applicant seem competent, and included GPA (3.30 in minor, 3.40 in major), work experience (e.g., Account Assistant at a computer store), honors (e.g., Dean's list), and training (such as special computer skills). Any information on the resume that would reveal the supposed candidate's identity (such as email, address, and last name) was blackened out; however, on one resume the White name appeared, on another the Black first name was listed, and on a third the entire name was marked out.

Participants and Design

Seventy-two students White students, equally divided by sex, volunteered for the study. Each participated under either a White or Black experimenter. The manipulations resulted in a 2 x 2 x 3 (Experimenter Race x Sex x Name: Black,

White, None) between-subjects design. Data from Black participants are being collected under similar conditions, but are not currently available. .

Dependent Measures

All participants indicated their opinions of the candidate's qualifications and abilities on 7-point bipolar scales with trait-opposite endpoints. Participants judged how likely they would be to hire the candidate (endpoints 1 "not likely" to 7 "very likely"), the candidate's future potential (anchors 1 "little potential" to 7 "much potential"), and the perceived competence, conscientiousness, honesty, and intelligence of the candidate (all with endpoints 1 "not at all" to 7 "very"). Finally, a fair starting salary for the candidate was requested.

Manipulation checks were then presented, including recall questions about resume information (i.e., candidate's major, college attended). Another set of questions required recall of the candidate's name, and ratings of name likability (endpoints 1 "don't like it at all" and 7 "like it a lot") and commonness (anchors 1 "not at all common" to 7 "very common"). Finally, participants indicated the likelihood that the candidate was White (endpoints 1 "not at all likely" to 7 "very likely") and completed a forced-choice measure of candidate race.

Procedure

Participants evaluated the resume in mixed-sex groups of two-six. After being told that the experiment evaluation of resumes, participants were given folders containing the resume and the scale booklets. The participants were then given five minutes to read the resume and indicate their perceptions of the job candidate via the scales regarding his traits, future, and abilities. After the five minutes were up, a second booklet of questions was distributed. On the first page, the recall questions about the resume were presented; on the second, judgments about names were

required; and on the last page the race indications appeared.

Results

Overview and Manipulation Check

Dependent measures were separately entered into 2 x 2 x 3 (Participant Sex x Experimenter Race x Name Condition: Black, White, None) ANOVAs, and Scheffé tests (alpha = .05) were used to make group comparisons. The means from these analyses are located in Table 1. Some data are missing. The name manipulation was successful, as perceptions of how likely it was that the candidate was White was affected by name condition, $F(2, 57) = 5.57$, $p < .005$. The White-named candidate as well as the one without a name given were judged as more likely to be White than was the Black-named candidate.

Influence of Candidate Name and Experimenter Race on Hiring and Traits

The analysis for judgments of how likely participants would be to hire the candidate revealed three marginal interactions. The Experimenter Race x Sex interaction ($F(1, 60) = 3.48$, $p = .07$) produced no meaningful post-hoc differences. However, results revealed a marginal interaction of experimenter race and name condition, $F(2, 60) = 2.61$, $p = .08$, and the Scheffé tests indicated that participants were less likely to hire the Black-named candidate compared to the White-named candidate and the candidate with no name only when making judgments for a Black experimenter. This interaction was qualified by a marginal triple-order interaction with sex, $F(2, 60) = 2.74$, $p = .07$. Post-hoc comparisons revealed that a lower likelihood of hiring the Black-named candidate for the Black experimenter was indicated only for men participants.

As is seen in Table 1, perceptions of candidate competence were influenced by experimenter race, as participants judged the candidates more competent under

Black, rather than White, experimenters, $F(1, 60) = 4.15$, $p = .05$. No significant main or interactive effects were noted for perceptions of intelligence and ability to take criticism.

Conscientiousness was slightly influenced by experimenter race, $F(1, 60) = 3.12$, p .08, as participants gave higher ratings on this dimension under a Black experimenter compared to a White experimenter. This effect was qualified by candidate name, $F(2, 60) = 5.28$, $p < .005$. When the experimenter was White, the White candidate was judged as more conscientious than the unnamed (but not the Black-named) candidate. However, when the Experimenter was Black, the candidate without a name was perceived as most conscientious, $ps < .05$.

Judgments of candidate honesty were affected by name and experimenter race, $F(2, 59) = 3.11$, $p = .05$. Scheffé tests indicated that the White-named candidate was perceived as more honest than the Black-named or unnamed candidate, but only when the experimenter was Black. Beliefs about the future potential of the job candidate varied as a function of candidate name, $F(2, 58) = 3.77$, $p < .05$. White-named candidates were thought to have a better future than Black-named and no-named candidates.

Finally, fair starting salary estimates were somewhat influenced by experimenter race and candidate name, $F(2, 58) = 2.96$, $p = .06$. Salary estimates for the Black-named candidates were lower than those for the unnamed and White-named candidates, but only when the experimenter was Black.

Because name likability and commonness may have affected views of the candidate, judgments on these dimensions were separately analyzed via parallel ANOVAs. No main or interactive effects emerged, suggesting that liking and familiarity with the names could not account for the foregoing pattern of results.

Discussion

The results revealed a mixed pattern of influence of job candidates' names and experimenter race on perceptions of the candidate. When the experimenter was Black, our White participants showed some bias against the Black job candidate, judging him as less honest, providing him a lower starting salary, and (for men participants) indicating a lower a lower likelihood of hiring him when compared to the White candidate. This pattern is surprising for two reasons. First, people thought that candidates were more competent and conscientious when the experimenter was Black. Second, the cue for careful, egalitarian behavior--a Black experimenter--apparently did not cause an "overcompensation" effect whereby participants attempted to be overtly non-racist, providing more positive evaluations of the candidate they thought was Black (Kleck, 1981). Perhaps under these circumstances (presence of a Black experimenter) our White participants attempted to suppress their undesirable racially-biased thoughts, leading to a "rebound" effect where stereotyping and bias became stronger (Macrae et al., 1994). Last, there were two cues to race (experimenter race and candidate name), which may have caused attention to one at the expense of the other. As cues to race must be made obvious in order to produce overt bias (Devine, 1989), participants may have not been attending to one cue enough so that standards for non-racist behavior were evident.

Regardless of judgments of the candidate and his abilities, participants agreed that the Black-named candidate had less potential than did the White-named candidate, acknowledging that forces outside of the candidate would help shape his future. Finally, many of the relationships found are not robust, and the data from Black participants are not yet available; thus, understanding of the influence of name and experimenter race on beliefs about job candidates is incomplete.

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Table 1

Mean Judgments of Candidate Qualifications and Traits as Function of Experimenter Race and Candidate Name

	Candidate's Name								
	Black			White			None		
	Experimenter Race								
	Black	White	Total	Black	White	Total	Black	White	Total
Likely to Hire[ac, *ab*, *abc*]	5.25	5.83	5.54	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	5.50	5.75
Conscientiousness[*a*, ab]	5.42	5.58	5.50	5.83	5.92	5.88	6.58	5.08	5.83
Competence[a]	6.33	5.50	5.92	5.83	5.92	5.88	6.08	5.58	5.83
Intelligence	5.42	5.92	5.67	5.92	6.00	5.96	5.42	5.75	5.58
Takes Criticism Well	4.17	5.17	4.67	5.00	4.27	4.65	5.08	4.92	5.00
Honesty[ab]	5.08	5.67	5.38	6.00	5.09	5.57	5.00	5.33	5.17
Future Potential[b]	5.82	5.92	5.87	6.75	6.09	6.43	5.67	5.83	5.75
Starting Salary[*b*]	22,182	33,108	27,882	29,167	33,091	31,043	29,147	25,292	27,354

Note. Labels denote more of the measure in question. Superscripts indicate significant effects for experimenter race ([a]), candidate name ([b]), sex ([c]), or interactions. Marginal effects ($p < .08$) are indicated by superscripts in italics.